

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OES-03

COME-00 SMI-01 SAJ-01 /059 W
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R 210848Z FEB 75

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3254

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0290

NOFORN

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: SWEL PINT CH

SUBJECT: LIAONING EARTH QUAKE

1. CANADIAN EMBOFFS HAVE PASSED ON FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON LIAONING EARTHQUAKE FROM AN OVERSEAS CHINESE SCIENTIST NOW VISITING CHINA. HIS SOURCES SAY THAT PEKING HAS PURPOSELY UNDERSTATED THE INTENSITY OF THE EARTHQUAKE (7.3 RATHER THAN 7.5 ON THE RICHTER SCALE) TO AVOID INVOLVEMENT WITH THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, THAT THE CHINESE WARNED THE POPULACE TO PREPARE FOR AN EARTHQUAKE BUT THAT FEW PEOPLE HEHEDED THE WARNING, THAT CASUALTIES WERE THEREFORE HIGH, AND THAT THERE WAS EXTENSIVE PROPERTY DAMAGE WITH EIGHT OF THE TEN BLAST FURNACES AT THE ANSHAN STEEL COMPLEX OUT OF COMMISSION.

2. SOURCE ALSO CLAIMS TO HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT CHINESE ARE
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EXPECTING A MAJOR EARTHQUAKE IN THE PEKING AREA WITHIN

A MONTH OR TWO AND THAT THEY HAVE DEPLOYED THOUSANDS OF PERSONS IN THE SHENYANG-PEKING-TANGSHAN TRIANGLE TO SEARCH FOR TELLTALE WARNING SIGNS. A MINOR EARTH TREMOR WAS SAID TO HAVE OCCURRED AT PAOTING SOUTH OF PEKING TWO OR THREE DAYS AGO.

3. CANADIANS HAVE BEEN ASSIDUOUSLY ACCUMULATING EARTHQUAKE RUMORS AROUND THE CITY. ONE RUMOR REPORTED A RECENT RADIO BROADCAST WARNING PEKING TO PREPARE FOR AN EARTHQUAKE, ANOTHER SAID CADRES WERE CAUTIONING A FEW SPECIAL FOREIGN FRIENDS TO PREPARE FOR THE WORST, AND A THIRD SAID BASIC PARTY UNITS AROUND THE CITY WERE BEING BRIEFED ON HOW TO PREPARE FOR A DISASTER HERE.

COMMENT: THE LIAONING EARTHQUAKE AND THE TREMOR FELT HERE HAVE MANY PEOPLE ON EDGE IN PEKING. IN THE ABSENCE OF HARD NEWS ON CASUALTIES AND PROPERTY DAMAGE, THE RUMOR MILL IS WORKING OVERTIME. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION ON THE EARTHQUAKE AVAILABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT, PARTICULARLY ANYTHING THE AMERICAN SEISMOLOGISTS MAY HAVE LEARNED ABOUT IT FROM THEIR COLLEAGUES IN THE PRC. WE HAVE ASKED GEOPHYSICAL SOCIETY FOR INFORMATION REQUESTED BY SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION BUT ARE NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT WE WILL GET A REPLY. WE WERE TOLD BY THE HEAD OF THE MFA'S DIPLOMATIC SERVICES BUREAU AT LUNCH TODAY THAT THERE HAD BEEN "LOSS OF LIFE" IN THE EARTHQUAKE.
BUSH

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